Statement

Custom duty % ad valorem

Year	Excise Duty in Rs./ Tonne	Melting Scrap	Sponge Iron	HBI
1980-81 . . .	220	Nil	Nil	Nil
1981-82	220	Nil	Nil	Nil
1982-83	220	5	Nil	Nil
1983-84	220	70	Nil	Nil
1984-85	220	15	Nil	Nil
1985-86	315	15	25	30
1986-87	315	*25 (upto Dec. 86) 20 (after Dec. 86)		30 (upto Dec. 86) 20 (after Dec. 86)
March 1987 . . .	365	20	20	20

*For Scrap and Sponge Iron.

Rise in prices of Black pepper

@2329. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of black pepper has risen quite substantially during the last two years;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and what was the production of black pepper during the years 1984, 1985 and 1986;

(c) whether Government are taking any steps to increase the production of black pepper in the country;

(d) whether it is a fact that businessmen are hoarding the Black Pepper and creating artificial scarcity just to increase the price of Black Pepper; and

(e) what steps Government propose to take to reduce the prices of black pepper in the market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) and (b) Wholesale prices of black pepper generally recorded increases during 1985-86 because of fall in production in the year 1984-85. However, from November, 1986 onwards there has been a perceptible fall in prices of black pepper.

The All-India Production of black pepper which stood at 22.7 thousand tonnes in 1983-84 decreased to 18.2 thousand tonnes in 1984-85, but increased to the peak level of 30.4 thousand tonnes in 1985-86.

(c) A number of steps are being taken to increase the production of black pepper. These include production and distribution of rooted cuttings of high yielding pepper varieties; establishment of model gardens for high yielding pepper varieties; distribution of input kits and sprayers to small and marginal farmers; field demonstration of pepper and rehabilitation of pepper gardens.

(d) There are no reports of withholding of stocks of black pepper by traders on a large scale.

(e) The measures taken to give a boost to the production of black pepper in the country are expected to have a salutary effect on prices.

@Previously Unstarred Question 1655 transferred from 5th May, 1987